

OKLAHOMA SERVES CAPACITY BUILDING AMERICORPS PROGRAM



2010-2011 HOST SITE INFORMATION AND APPLICATION PACKET

Amy Roff, Oklahoma Serves Program Director
Melinda Points, Assistant Director/AmeriCorps Director
Nancy Sharrock, Executive Director
Oklahoma Community Service Commission
730 W. Wilshire Blvd., Suite 101
Oklahoma City, OK 73116
405-858-7278
405-858-7282 (FAX)

INTRODUCTION

AmeriCorps can be thought of as a domestic “Peace Corps” program - instead of helping abroad, service-minded individuals serve in local communities to help solve critical community needs. Since 1994, approximately 670,000 Americans have participated in AmeriCorps, a national service initiative that provides an education award and a small living allowance for individuals who commit to a full or part-time term of community service. In Oklahoma, AmeriCorps members have been impacting communities statewide in numerous ways by tutoring and mentoring students, serving in after-school and summer programs for at-risk youth, responding to natural disasters, revitalizing neighborhoods, providing home repairs for low-income families and offering financial literacy programs. In the tradition of AmeriCorps* VISTA and the Peace Corps, AmeriCorps members receive minimal financial compensation for their efforts.

Non-profit organizations have seen an increased need for their services across the state due to the recent economic downturn. Budget declines and decreased financial donations have resulted in program cuts and staff lay-offs. The **Oklahoma Serves Capacity Building AmeriCorps Program** is designed to help fill this service gap by providing members to assist agencies with capacity building - increasing the number of services offered to clients from the prior year and assisting agencies with volunteer generation and management. Since the inception of the program in 2009, 40 Capacity-Based members have impacted the lives of over 11,000 Oklahomans, recruited 7851 volunteers, and provided 240 client services.

The Capacity-Based program replicates the Oklahoma Serves Youth-Based program design, altering it only based upon the populations that are served, **which includes family, adult and senior residents throughout the state of Oklahoma.**

Full-time and half-time members who complete their service earn an AmeriCorps Education Award to pay for college, graduate school, or to repay qualified student loans. However, the long-term impact on the members themselves and the communities they serve is immeasurable.

OVERVIEW

AmeriCorps is a national service program of the federal agency, the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). The Oklahoma Community Service Commission has been given the opportunity to host the Oklahoma Serves Capacity Building program where AmeriCorps members assist agencies with capacity building - increasing the number of services offered to clients from the prior year and assisting agencies with volunteer generation and management. This program opportunity is available to state or local nonprofit organizations, public agencies, colleges and universities, schools, religious organizations and other community-based organizations that serve family, adult and senior populations.

The program is partially funded through a grant from the federal agency, CNCS, with host sites contributing cash and in-kind funds to share in the cost of federal cash match requirements. Organizations of all sizes and levels of development are encouraged to apply. Please refer to the “Key Elements of a Successful Host Site” on page six to gauge your readiness to host AmeriCorps members.

WHAT IS AMERICORPS?

AmeriCorps can be thought of as a domestic “Peace Corps” program - instead of helping abroad, service-minded individuals serve in local communities to help solve critical community needs. Organizations would be hosting an AmeriCorps member - like a full time volunteer, but with much higher levels of accountability and commitment. In exchange for their service, AmeriCorps members receive a living allowance and an education award to attend college or pay back qualified student loans, among other benefits. AmeriCorps is a national program with 75,000 individuals serving per year - organizations like the American Red Cross, United Way agencies and school districts utilize AmeriCorps members extensively to help accomplish their missions. Visit www.americorps.org for more general information on AmeriCorps.

The following positions will be available for the 2010-11 program year:

Position Type	Service Hours	Max Service Period	Minimum Living Allowance	Education Award	Grant Award	Cash Match Required*	Health Care	Child Care
Full-time	1,700	12 Months	\$14,000	\$5,350	\$10,500	\$5,000-\$10,000	No-cost Benefit	No-cost Benefit
Half-time	900	12 Months	\$7,200	\$2,675	\$5,100	\$3,000-\$10,000	Benefit provided: member expense	Not Provided

**Cash match includes grantee share for member living allowance and also includes employers FICA, workers compensation, SUTA, member training, travel expenses, and in-kind support. Documentation of match is required.*

Full-time Oklahoma Serves Members will serve 1,700 hours within 12 months and receive a living allowance of at least \$14,000, health care (if not already covered under another plan), and child care (must qualify)-along with an AmeriCorps Education Award of \$5,350.

Half-time Oklahoma Serves Members will serve 900 hours within 12 months and receive a living allowance of at least \$7,200 along with an AmeriCorps Education Award of \$2,675.

Full-time and half-time members will begin their terms of service September 1, 2010.

All members must complete their terms no later than August 31, 2011.

Your organization may be eligible to receive a \$10,500 grant by competing to host a full-time member (1,700 hours), and/or a \$5,100 grant to host a half-time member (900 hours).

Your organization may apply for up to five (5) FTE-full time equivalent positions.

The application is attached and is due to the Oklahoma Community Service Commission no later than 5:00 p.m. on **June 23, 2010**. *Please submit one unbound, single-sided original paper application plus two stapled copies.*

If you are interested in applying to participate in this program or if you have any questions, please contact us by email: aroff@okamericorps.com or telephone: (405) 585-7278.

COMPLETED APPLICATION DUE: June 23, 2010

PLEASE MAIL TO (FAXED copies will not be accepted):

Amy Roff
Oklahoma Community Service Commission
730 W. Wilshire Blvd., Suite 101
Oklahoma City, OK 73116

THE OKLAHOMA SERVES CAPACITY BUILDING AMERICORPS PROGRAM - WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?

WHAT IS CAPACITY BUILDING?

Capacity Building is a process that helps a program or organization enhance its mission, strategy, skills, systems, infrastructure, and human resources to better serve community needs. Building capacity can range from creating the basic building blocks of your organization to expanding to new programs, service areas and the ability to serve more clients. Fundamentally, capacity building is focused on increasing the impact, effectiveness and efficiency of your organization and its programs.

ROLE OF AN OKLAHOMA SERVES CAPACITY BUILDING MEMBER

Oklahoma Serves Capacity Building members will serve in state or local nonprofit organizations, public agencies, colleges and universities, schools, religious organizations and other community-based organizations dedicated to serving family, adult and senior populations. The Oklahoma Serves Capacity Building AmeriCorps Program will help fill a service gap by recruiting members to assist agencies with capacity building - increasing the number of services offered to clients from the prior year and assisting agencies with volunteer generation and management.

WHAT COULD AN OKLAHOMA SERVES CAPACITY BUILDING MEMBER BE TO YOUR ORGANIZATION?

- A full or part-time coordinator of individual or multiple sites, such as programs that provide access to resources for families
- A half-time member serving the elderly
- An entrepreneur initiating a program to provide multiple resources to families that have been affected by the economy; for example, assisting clients with job search, resumes, and educational opportunities
- A recruiter and manager of volunteers in a local or regional effort

SAMPLE ACTIVITIES AN OKLAHOMA SERVES CAPACITY BUILDING MEMBER CAN SUPPORT

- Help increase the number of clients an agency serves
- Expansion of your organization with new programs and service areas
- Volunteer recruitment and management
- Provide resources for residents who have been affected by the economic downturn

WHAT IS A HOST SITE RESPONSIBLE FOR?

- \$5,000 to \$10,000 in cash match for a full-time position
- \$3,000 to \$10,000 in cash match for a half-time position
- Office or desk space and access to computer, phone, fax, copier, etc.
- Site specific training related to member objectives
- Assignment of a site supervisor to supervise the AmeriCorps member's day-to-day activities, evaluate the member's performance twice a year and approve the member's time sheets and monthly reports
- Demonstration of an ability to achieve measurable outcomes consistent with the OK Serves program design
- Cash and in-kind match documentation
- Advertisement of position and recruitment of AmeriCorps member(s)

- Reimbursement of service-related mileage and other related expenses on a monthly basis to member(s)
- Provide AmeriCorps members with appropriate mentoring and leadership opportunities that will enhance their professional development, including arranging for their participation in AmeriCorps sponsored trainings

RESTRICTIONS

AmeriCorps members may not participate in political activities, lobbying, union and or labor campaigns, fundraising for general operating funds (members may assist in fundraising efforts targeting the sustainability of their project), religious proselytizing, or providing support for a for-profit organization while they are earning AmeriCorps service hours. AmeriCorps members may never be used in a capacity to replace or displace employees.

HOST SITE SELECTION CRITERIA

Host sites will be selected on the following criteria:

- Organizational capacity of host site
- Community need for the project
- Commitment to capacity building and sustainability activities
- Demonstration of clear responsibilities and goals for AmeriCorps members
- Commitment to members’ leadership and professional development
- Demonstration of clear and consistent member supervision
- General application quality

AMERICORPS READINESS - INTERNAL SELF-ASSESSMENT SURVEY

Key Elements of a Successful Host Site
Effective organizational structure to successfully meet the needs of your community
Commitment and support of Board of Directors and Staff to meet AmeriCorps program requirements, regulations and timelines
Effective financial systems and resources to successfully support the operations of your site and to document cash and in-kind match
Commitment and support of staff to effectively supervise, train and mentor AmeriCorps member(s)
Commitment to the mission of AmeriCorps program to expand volunteerism and service

Oklahoma Serves Capacity Building AmeriCorps Host Site Application Form

I. Organization:

Organization Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

E-mail address: _____

Organization or Agency Director: _____

On-Site supervisor (if different): _____

II. Type of Applicant: (check one)

- Non-profit agency
- State agency/government
- Indian tribe
- Religious Organization
- School
- Other

Employer Identification Number: _____

III. Number of Oklahoma Serves Members requested:

Your organization may apply for up to five (5) FTE-full time equivalent positions.

Full-Time Positions

Half-Time Positions

IV. Eligibility Requirements

(Please circle “Yes” “No” or “N/A” for each of the following.)

- Yes No N/A Is your organization an equal opportunity employer, which does not restrict or refuse services based on race, religion, age, disability, political affiliation, veteran status, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, or national origin?
- Yes No N/A Is your organization in compliance with the “Drug Free Workplace” federal grant recipient requirements?
- Yes No N/A Can your organization provide a minimum of \$5,000 non-federal cash match to cover a portion of the living costs for each full-time AmeriCorps member and other expenses associated with each member placed with your organization and provide documentation of matching funds?
- Yes No N/A Can your organization provide a minimum of \$3,000 non-federal cash match to cover a portion of the living costs for each half-time AmeriCorps member and other expenses associated with each member placed with your organization and provide documentation of matching funds?
- Yes No N/A Will time be provided for site supervisors to attend the Oklahoma Community Service Commission’s orientation and training in Oklahoma City?
- Yes No N/A Will time be provided for the Oklahoma Serves member(s) to attend the Commission sponsored trainings? Approximately three mandatory trainings per year for full-time members and one member orientation for half-time member(s).
- Yes No N/A Will your organization provide required OSBI background checks for the Oklahoma Serves member(s)?
- Yes No N/A Will your organization provide training for the Oklahoma Serves member(s) specific to the members’ service activities at your site?
- Yes No N/A Is your organization able to recruit qualified Oklahoma Serves members?
- Yes No N/A Does your organization agree to complete and return all reports, requests for data and performance reports in a timely manner?
- Yes No N/A Will your organization’s Oklahoma Serves member(s) participate in one or more days of service, including but not limited to Martin Luther King Jr. Day, AmeriCorps Week, etc.

V. PROPOSED PROJECT PLAN

Please respond with no more than three to five pages (3-5) additional single sided, double-spaced pages. Use the questions or points below as HEADINGS for each section in your project plan.

Project Narrative:

- A. Briefly describe the primary purpose of your organization.
- B. Describe in detail the types of service activities that each AmeriCorps member requested will be performing.
- C. What funding sources will your agency utilize to secure the cash match for each member?
- D. Please describe and estimate the amount of grantee in-kind match (used to help meet the overall federal match requirements).
- E. Will your Oklahoma Serves member(s) recruit and/or manage volunteers? If so please describe.
- F. Oklahoma Serves members are required to attend general trainings of the Oklahoma Community Service Commission (approximately three mandatory trainings per year for full-time members and one member orientation for half time members), as well as participate in Corps-wide service projects. Please describe how you will support the project when the Oklahoma Serves member(s) are away from your site.
- G. Your organization is responsible for training specific to the member's day-to-day assignments to your organization. Please describe how you will train your member(s).
- H. Who will supervise the AmeriCorps member(s)? Please describe the site supervisor's time availability and suitability to manage AmeriCorps members.
- I. What resources will be made available for the Oklahoma Serves member(s) to ensure the success of the project? (Check all that apply.)

<input type="checkbox"/> Office/desk	<input type="checkbox"/> Computer	<input type="checkbox"/> FAX Machine
<input type="checkbox"/> Postage	<input type="checkbox"/> Copier	<input type="checkbox"/> Internet
<input type="checkbox"/> Phone	<input type="checkbox"/> Mileage/service related reimbursement	
- J. Please describe other resources that will be made available to the Oklahoma Serves member(s) (training materials, etc.).

MEMBER ELIGIBILITY

An eligible member is an individual who:

- Is a U.S. citizen or U.S national or lawful permanent resident alien of the United States
- Is at least 17 years of age at the commencement of service
- Has a High School diploma or an equivalency certificate or agrees to obtain a high school diploma or its equivalent before using an education award.

VI. Checklist of documents that must accompany this application:

- _____ Two (2) letters of support from community agencies (organizations) with whom your agency will collaborate.
- _____ Latest form 990 filed with IRS
- _____ IRS non-profit letter of determination (if your agency has non-profit classification)
- _____ Complete list of Board of Directors and Board Positions
- _____ Agency drug free workplace policy
- _____ Signed copy of the attached statement on AmeriCorps Prohibited Activities (See Appendix A)
- _____ List of sources of matching funds

PLEASE SIGN:

I certify that the information contained in this Host Site Application is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I understand that this application does not guarantee the placement of an Oklahoma Serves AmeriCorps member in my agency.

Name of Organization: _____

Authorized Signature	Date
-----------------------------	-------------

**This application must be received at the
Oklahoma Community Service Commission
by 5:00 p.m. on June 23, 2010 for consideration.**

**Please submit one unbound,
single-sided original paper application plus two stapled copies.**

Appendix A

AMERICORPS PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES (Please Read and Sign)

AmeriCorps members are prohibited from a number of activities while they are earning service hours. (from Federal Regulations, 45 C.F.R.2520.30). A partial list is provided below. In no way should AmeriCorps members participate in these activities during service hours or as a part of his/her service, nor should he/she wear AmeriCorps uniforms, identification, buttons, etc., while participating in these activities, or otherwise identify or associate such activities with an AmeriCorps program. Individuals may exercise their rights as private citizens and may participate in the activities listed below on their own initiative, on non-AmeriCorps time, and using non-AmeriCorps funds:

- Attempting to influence legislation.
- Organizing or engaging in protests, petitions, boycotts, or strikes.
- Assisting, promoting, or deterring union organizing.
- Impairing existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements.
- Engaging in partisan political activities or other activities designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office.
- Participating in, or endorsing events or activities that are likely to include advocacy for or against political parties, political platforms, political candidates proposed legislation, or elected officials.
- Engaging in religious instruction; conducting worship services; providing instruction as part of a program that includes mandatory religious instruction or worship, constructing or operating facilities devoted to religious instruction or worship, maintaining facilities primarily or inherently devoted to religious instruction or worship, or engaging in any form of religious proselytization.
- Activities that pose a significant safety risk.
- Assignments that displace paid employees.
- Providing a direct benefit to:
 1. A business organized for profit;
 2. A labor union;
 3. A partisan political organization;
 4. An organization engaged in the religious activities described in the preceding sub-clause, unless the grant funds are not used to support the religious activities.
 5. A nonprofit that fails to comply with the restrictions contained in

section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 except that nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent members or participants from engaging in advocacy activities undertaken at their own initiative.

- Voter registration drives.
- An AmeriCorps member is not permitted to fill in for an absent employee or perform services, duties, or activities assigned to a paid employee at the host agency.
- An AmeriCorps member may not do anything at a host agency to displace a paid employee or position or to infringe upon a paid employee's promotional opportunities.
- Fundraising and grant writing activities.

I have read and understand the above statements on AmeriCorps Prohibited Activities. If chosen as an Oklahoma Serves AmeriCorps site, our members(s) will not participate in AmeriCorps Prohibited Activities.

Name of Organization: _____

Signature of Director or On-Site Supervisor

Date